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NAVAGRAHA KĪRTANAS

OF

ŚRĪ MUTTUSWAMI DĪKSHITAR

SANSKRIT TEXTS IN DEVANAGARI

With English translation and critical comments

by

S. S. JANAKI

*Souvenir of Guruguha Sangeet Sammelan
(218th Jayanti of Muttuswami Dikshitar)*

CALCUTTA, APRIL 1993

To
Dr. N. Ramanathan
and

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Smt. Hema

From
P. S. Janaki
1 May 92

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NAVAGRAHA KRITIS OF SRI MUTTUSVAMI DIKSHITA

Amongst the group kritis of Muttusvami Dikshita (M.D.) the seven or nine compositions on the planets occupy an important place. As is his wont he has made the texts of these songs rich in symbolism, using a wide variety of terminology drawn from Indian Philosophy, mantra sastra and astrology, puranic and mythological allusions, and iconographical descriptions of the planetary deities. They are couched in assonant and significant expressions, along with his characteristic musical craftsmanship. According to tradition Dikshitar composed the seven kritis on the planets Sun to Saturn ^{for} of alleviating the acute stomach pain of his dear pupil Tambiappan.










Navagraha Worship: In order to understand and appreciate the rich content of Dikshitar's Navagraha kritis we may now see in brief the highlights on the Navagrahas found in the large corpus of literature, Smriti, Dharma Sastra, Upanishad, Purana, Jyotisha and Agama. The varied texts inform us of the planets directly influencing our earth and the remote constellations, their interactions, their nature and function described symbolically through the character of the presiding deities.

The Smritis and Puranas deal with the Santi rites for the nine grahas, viz, the Sun, the Moon, Mars, Mercury, Jupiter, Venus, Saturn (mentioned in the order of the week-days), Rahu and Ketu. This navagraha-santi is the model (prakriti) for all santi-homas in all medieval digests. Yajnavalkya (I. 294) says: 'one desirous of prosperity, of removing evil or calamities, of rainfall (for crops), long life, bodily health and one desirous of performing magic rites against enemies and others should perform a sacrifice to planets.'

Besides the graha-santis performed at home, it is common knowledge that the nine planets in a group are worshipped in all temples. The disposition of the navagrahas according to the cardinal directions also has significance in terms of their status. In many South Indian temples, Surya is placed at the centre while the other eight planets face the eight cardinal directions-Sukra facing North, Candra NE, Angaraka E, Rahu SE, Sani S, Ketu SW, Brhaspati W and Budha NW. The eight directions are said to correspond with the eight-part division of the day which emanates from Surya. There are many variants for the disposition of the *Navagrahas*, as within a temple complex this is determined in relationship to placements of stars and planets at the time of commencement of construction. Nevertheless many South Indian temples arrange the nine planetary deities in a single group next to one another facing the respective directions.

The following are some important details as regards the navagrahas:

ATTENDANT DEITIES AND SYMBOLISMS FOR OBLATIONS OF THE NAVAGRAHAS (The 9 Planets)

		<u>Deities*</u>	<u>Foods</u>	<u>Element</u>	<u>Color</u>	<u>Gemstone</u>
Sun		Rudra Agni	wheat/sugar	fire	white	ruby
Moon		Gaurī	rice	water	white	pearl
Mars		Kṣetrapati Pṛthvī	peas	fire	red	coral
Mercury		Nārāyaṇa Viṣṇu	green lentil	earth	yellow	emerald
Jupiter		Brahmā Indra	peanuts rice curd	-	yellow	yellow sapphire
Venus		Marutvat Indrānī	small beans clarified butter	water	white	diamond
Saturn		Prajāpati Yama	sesame seeds sesame oil	space	blue	blue sapphire
Dragon's head		Sarparāja Godhāvati	black lentil	-	smoke	hessonite garnet
Dragon's tail		Brahmā Citragupta	horse grain lemon rice	-	smoke	cat's eye

* The primary attendant deity (atidevatā) is listed first, followed the secondary attendant deity (pratidevatā).

१. सौराष्ट्र रागः चतुरश्र ध्रुव तालः

- पल्लवि : सूर्यमूतं नमोऽस्तु ते सुन्दरच्छायाधिपते
 अनुपल्लवि : कार्यकारणात्मक जगत्प्रकाश सिंहराश्यधिपते
 मध्यमकाल साहित्य : आर्यविनुततेजस्फूर्त्त आरोग्यादिफलदकीर्ते
 चरणम् : सारसमित्र मित्र भानो सहस्रकिरण कर्णसूनो
 क्रूरपापहरकृशानो गुरुगुहमोदितस्वभानो
 सूरिजनेडितसुदिनमणे सोमादिग्रहशिखामणे
 धीराचित कर्मसाक्षिणे दिव्यतरसप्ताश्वरथिने
 म. का. : सौराष्ट्रार्णमन्त्रात्मने सौवर्णस्वरूपात्मने
 भारतीशहरिहरात्मने भुक्तिमुक्तिवितरणात्मने ॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

“Salutation to Lord in the form of Surya, the Lord of the beautiful Chaya.

You are responsible for all infinite causes and effects in the world, Oh illuminator, the Lord of Simha rasi.

One whose effulgent lustre blazes on being praised by those of highest esteem, the bestower of benefits such as good health.

Friend to the day-lotus, a friend to all, the most resplendent one, the thousand-rayed, the father of Karna; the fire swallowing dreadful sins, whose brilliance has delighted Guruguha, one who is praised by the learned, the auspicious day-jewel, crest-jewel to Candra and other planets, worshipped by the energetic, the witness to all actions, one who has the chariot drawn by the seven divine horses.

One whose principle nature is embedded in the eight-syllabled mantra, who is of golden hue, of the nature of Brahma, Vishnu and Siva, and who confers material benefits and spiritual emancipation.”

Comments :

1. सुन्दरच्छायाधिपते - Surya or Vivasvan married Samjna, the daughter of Tvashta, and through her got the sons Vaivasvata Manu, Yama, Yamuna and the twin gods Asvins. Samjna was not able to withstand the scorching heat of sun. Hence she created as her representative, her own shadow (Chaya) to be Sun's wife and went to her father's house. Surya got through Chaya, sons Saturn and Manu Savarni.

2. कार्यकारणात्मक - From the Vedic times there are ample references to show that sun is most essential for the continuity of the life of all static and and dynamic things and for all happenings in the world. For example - सूर्य आत्मा जगतः तस्थुषश्च - (Rig Veda I. 115.1). "Sun is the soul of all that moves and stands still".

3. आर्यविनुततेजःस्फूर्ते, सूरिजनेडितसुदिनमणे, धीराचित - Many heroes of epics and Puranas, and historical kings are known to have regularly or occasionally worshipped Surya. Some of these personages are—

- a) Rama belonged to Suryavamsa and worshipped his progenitor. Particularly when he was somewhat fatigued at the battle-field at Lanka, he received the hymn Aditya-hridaya from sage Agasthya, recited the same three times and felt reinforced.
- b) In the Mahabharata (Vana Parva) the exiled Yudhishtira worshipped the Sun and obtained from him the vessel of inexhaustible food, the Akshaya-patra. In this connection, Yudhishtira praised Surya with 108 names.
- c) Samba Purana, a repository of information on Sun, describes Samba, Krishna's son, being cured of leprosy after worshipping Sun.
- d) As known from Bana's Harshacarita, Prabhakaravardhana, father of King Harshavardhana of Thanesvar, daily adored Surya and recited the Adityahridaya stotra three times a day.
- e) Mayura, Bana's father-in-law, praised the Sun in 100 verses, which make up the Suryasataka, and became free from leprosy.

4. सारसमित्र - friend of the day-lotus. According to practice and poetic convention day lotuses bloom on contact with sun-beams.

5. मित्र - an epithet of Aditya or Surya. In the Vedas he is coupled with varuna. Mitra as a god is known even as old as 1400 B.C. in the Middle East

and the West ; during this early period at a place called Bagozko in Anatolia Mitra along with the Vedic gods Indra, Varuna and Nasatyau or Asvins, was invoked.

6. कर्णसूनो - From the Mahabharata it is known that Karna was got as the son of Kunthi through Sun-god, when she invoked the latter by the mantra given to her by sage Durvasas.

7. कर्मसाक्षिणे - Sun was regarded in India and Middle East, as the God of right and justice and the impartial surveyor from above of the deeds of men-Karmasakshin and Jagacchakshus, as we would say. In Rig Veda, Mitra-Varuna are specially considered as vigilant supervisors and moral mentors of mankind. A few examples are—

a) उद्वेति सुभगो विश्वचक्षाः साधारणः सूर्यः etc. (Rig Veda VII. 63.1)

“Here rises the beautiful, the one common lord of mankind, the witness to every thing”.

b) स्पशं विश्वस्य (Rig Veda IV. 13.3)

‘He is the spy of the universe’

c) अन्तः पश्यन्ति वृजिनोत साधु । (Rig Veda II. 27.3)

“Adityas see the good and bad inside the people.”

8. दिव्यतरसप्ताश्वरथिने - Sun is said to ride a chariot with one wheel and twelve spokes; it is drawn by seven horses, considered differently to be the seven sacred Vedic metres, or 7 days of the week or the 7 colours of the solar spectrum. Aruna is its charioteer. 6000 small-sized ascetics called Valakilyas offer hymns to him. Pulastya and eleven other sages worship him, one at a time every month. The great serpents Vasuki and others pull his chariot. Several asuras wander round his chariot, while Gandharvas sing and Apsarases dance.

9. सोराष्टाणमन्त्रात्मने - The - eight syllabled Surya mantra is- ओं वृणिः सूर्य आदित्य । The Suryatapinyupanishad (pp. 54-60, in Unpublished Upanishads, Theosophical Society, Adyar, 1933) contains many mantras related to Sun. In its third Patala (p. 57) it gives the above eight-syllabled mantra and says—

अत्र सौरमनूनि प्रवक्ष्यामि निगमोदितानि । वृणिरिति द्वे अक्षरे । सूर्य इति त्रीणि । आदित्य इति त्रीणि । एतद्वै सावित्रस्याष्टाक्षरं पदं श्रियाभिषिक्तम् ।

On the constant recitation and meditation of the above mantra one can realise Aditya as the Light, Bliss, Immortality, the Brahman and all the three worlds.

10 भारतीय-हरि-हरान्मने - The idea that the Sun represents the trinity, Brahma, Vishnu and Siva individually and together lies scattered in varied texts and modes of Upasanas. A few of these are—

a. Dhyana sloka of Surya-

विष्णुब्रह्मशिवस्वरूपहृदयं वन्दे सदा भास्करम् ।

b. One of his 108 names—सृष्टिस्थित्यन्तकारिण

c. In Suryastotra after japa—

ब्रह्मस्वरूप उदये मध्याह्ने तु महेश्वरः ।

अस्तकाले स्वयं विष्णुः त्रयीमूर्तिर्दिवाकरः ॥

d. In Surya - pithamantra (Saradatilaka)

ब्रह्मविष्णुशिवात्मकाय सौराय योगपीठाय नमः ।

e. एष ब्रह्मा च विष्णुश्च शिवः ।

(In Adityahridaya, Valmiki Ramayana, Yuddha Kanda)

f. In Suryatapinyupanishad (Ibid. pp. 54. 55)—

(i) स ब्रह्मा स शिवः स हरिः etc.

(ii) एष ब्रह्मा च विष्णुश्च रुद्र एष हि भास्करः ।

त्रिमूर्त्यात्मा त्रिवेदात्मा सर्वदेवमयो रविः ।

The Chandogya and Brihadaranyaka Upanishads describe the Upasana of Surya as presided over by the Supreme Being Purusha. This Purusha in the Aditya-mandala has also been taken in Saguna form as Surya-Narayana or as Samba. According to the internal preferences of the Panchayatana worshipper, those who prefer Narayana as the indwelling Being contemplate so :

ध्येयः सदा सवितृमण्डलमध्यवर्ती

नारायणः सरसिजासनसन्निविष्टः ।

And those who prefer Siva contemplate accordingly—

सौरमण्डलमध्यस्थं साम्बं संसारभेषजम् ।
नीलग्रीवं विरूपाक्षं नमामि शिवमव्ययम् ॥

Of Vishnu or Siva, the Sun along with the Moon has also been taken as the Eye Cf. the Purusha Sukta - चक्षोस्सूर्योऽजायत । 'The Sun was born of the eye of the Purusha'.

There are some composite sculptures of Sun, which may be taken as representing the Trimurtis, Sun, Siva, Vishnu and Brahma with three or four faces. The Martanda Bhairava image is to represent the Trimurtis according to the Saradatilaka.

Structural beauty :

As Surya is the principal among the nine planets Dikshitar has naturally given him an eminent position in his song. As seen above a fund of information is conveyed through the song. Structurally too it is a grand composition with two madhyama kala sahityas in the anupallavi and charana, in the majestic slow tempo, set in the raga Saurashtra and Chaturasra Dhruva tala. The raga is well chosen. It contains all the seven ascending and descending notes of the scale. The name too is apt for in one way, Saurashtra or Saurashta refers to the name of the raga; and contextually too, it refers to the important eight-syllabled mantra (ashta-arna) of the sun (saura) which is very necessary for this deity's worship and meditation.

The song is full of assonant syllables or Anuprasa scattered throughout the composition. For example—

आर्यविनुत, आरोग्यादि; स्फूर्ते, कीर्ते; सारसमित्र, मित्र; सहस्रकिरण, कर्ण,
क्रूरपापहर, कृशानो; सुदिनमणे, शिखामणे; सौराष्टार्ण.....सौवर्ण



२. असावेरी रागः मठग्र तालः

- प. : चन्द्रं भज मानस साधुहृदयसदृशम्
 अ.प. : इन्द्रादिलोकपालेडिततारेशम्
 म.का. : इन्दुं षोडशकलाधरं निशाकरं
 इन्दिरासहोदरं सुधाकरमनिशम्
 च. : शङ्करमौलिविभूषणं शीतकिरणं चतुर्भुजं मदनच्छत्रं क्षपाकरं
 वेङ्कटेशनयनं विराष्मनोजननं विधुं कुमुदमितं विधिगुरुगुहवक्त्रं
 म.का. : शशाङ्कं गोष्पतिशापानुग्रहपात्रं शरच्चन्द्रिकाधवलप्रकाशगात्रं
 कङ्कणकेयूरहारमकुटादिधरं पङ्कजरिपुं रोहिणीप्रियकरचतुरम्

Mind, worship Chandra (pure and pleasing) who is like hearts of all good men.

(Worship Him) Always, the Lord of the stars praised by the guardian deities of Indra and others, who moistens the Earth, the one with 16 digits and rich in nectar.

(Worship Him), the ornament on Lord Siva's crest, the cool-rayed, the four-armed, the parasol of Madana, the night-maker, the eye of Lord Venkatesa, mentally created by Virāt, the inflictor of suffering; the friend of the night-lotus and the face of Lord Subramanya who became the teacher of the creator.

(Worship Him) who bears the mark of the hare; who was first cursed and later favoured by Brihaspati, with his white body shining bright in autumn, the wearer of armlets, bracelets, necklace and crown, enemy of the day-lotus and a courteous lover of Rohini.

Comments :

1. इन्द्रादिलोकपालेडिततारेशम् - Chandra is called the lord of stars (Tāresa). There are 27 stars from Asvini to Revathi which oversee the 27 lunar mansions of the Zodiac. The Moon is glorified by the gods in charge of the directions and cardinal points. These eight gods are Indra, Agni, Yama, Nirrithi, Varuna, Vayu

Kubera and Isana, respectively guarding the quarters east, south-east, south-west, west, north-west, north and north-east.

2. इन्दु, चन्द्र, विधु - Non-descriptive epithets of moon. Indu is derived from the root 'und' to 'wet' or 'moist'. According to the lexicon Sabdakalpadruma moon is called 'Indu' as it wets the earth with its cool flow of nectar. उनति अमृतधारया भुवं क्लिप्नां करोति.

Dr. Monier Williams (Sanskrit-English Dictionary) states that in the Vedic literature 'Indu' meant only a 'drop' especially of the Soma Juice but in the Brahmana literature 'Indu' is used only for the moon. He adds- "The connection between the meanings 'Soma Juice' and the word 'moon' in the word 'Indu' has led to the same two ideas being transferred in classical Sanskrit to the word 'Soma' although the latter has properly only the sense 'Soma Juice'.

Chandra is formed from the root 'Chand' meaning 'to delight' and 'to be bright'—चन्दयति आह्लादयति ; चन्दति दीप्यते इति वा.

Vidhu derived from the root 'Vidh' 'to harm' or 'inflict pain; Chandra is called 'Vidhu' for he causes suffering to separated lovers and he himself suffers when he is seized by Rahu. - विध्यति विरहिणं, विध्यते राहुणेति वा.

3. षोडशकलाधरं, रोहिणीप्रियकरचतुरं - These epithets refer to the 16 lunar phases. According to the Puranas, Chandra married the 27 daughters of Daksha, namely, the stars Asvini to Revathi. As Chandra showed special preference to Krittika and Rohini the other daughters complained to Daksha. The latter cursed Chandra to suffer from consumption. It is said from that day he began to lose his splendour gradually. However by praying to Siva Chandra regained his lustre. This accounts for the Moon's regular waning and waxing phases during the dark and bright fortnights, and Chandra having the 16 Kalas. The descriptive epithet 'Rohini-priyakara Chatura' in the song shows Chandra's special attachment to Rohini.

4. निशाकर, क्षपाकर - Both refer to Chandra causing night; 'Niśa', and 'Kshapā' are synonyms meaning 'night'.

5. इन्दिरासहोदर - 'Brother of Lakshmi'. According to the Mahabharata and the puranas, Moon, Goddess Lakshmi, the divine gem Kaustubha and other precious things came up at the time of the churning of the milky ocean by devas and asuras. According to some versions of the story when the gods swooned due

to the appearance of deadly poison the Moon arose to revive the gods. Hence Chandra is called as one born along with the goddess Lakshmi.

6. सुधाकर, शीतकिरण - As opposed the hot-rayed Sun, Moon's rays are cool and like nectar. Hence these two names are supplied to Chandra.

7. शङ्करमौलिविभूषणम् - In para 3 above it was seen that Chandra glorified Siva in order to be relieved of the disease of consumption. Siva not only provided the necessary relief but also blessed Chandra by accepting the digital moon as his head-ornament.

8. चतुर्भुजं, कङ्कणकेयूरहारमकुटादिवरम् - In the Saguna Upasana of Chandra as a deity, he is described in the different dhyana-slokas. According to these verses he is endowed with four arms; generally he carries night lilies in his two hands at the back, the other two in the front are in the abhaya and varada posture. As a personified deity he is also decorated with armlets, bracelets, necklaces, and crown,

9. मदनच्छत्रम् - This attribute to Chandra is rather problematic; of course the general idea herein is clear. In worldly parlance and poetic convention Moon, Spring season, cool breeze, etc., are helpers to lovers in union and hence the associates of Manmatha or the lord of love. Chandra described in the song as being the 'parasol of Manmatha' symbolises the role of Moon as a follower and attendant of Manmatha,

In Alamkara Sastra, Moon, pleasurable garden, etc. are called the inciters of love (Uddīpana-vibhāvas).

10. वेङ्कटेशनयन - The form of Siva has three eyes, the Sun, Moon and Fire, the three sources of fire that illuminate the worlds. Moon is Siva's left eye.

11. विराग्नमनोजननम् - The secondary creator Virāt-Purusha was created by Brahman as the primeval man. In this secondary creation Moon is said to have been born from the Mind of the Virāt Purusha - चन्द्रमा मनसो जातः.

12. कुमुदमित्रं, पङ्कजरिपुम् - At the contact of moon-beams the night lilies blossom, while the day-lotus blooms at the rise of the sun and withers away at the appearance of moon. Hence Moon is described in the song as the friend of night-lily and enemy of day-lotuses.

13. विधिगुरुगुह्यवक्त्रम् - According to my Śaiva Āgama teacher, Sri K. A. Sabharatnam Sivacharya, Subrahmanya became the teacher of Brahmā in clarifying the meaning of the Pranava; Chandra then became the face of Subrahmanya.

14. शशङ्क - 'One having the mark of a hare'. Various explanations are given about the dark surface marking on the Moon. According to some, this outline form is that of a hare, according to others, that of a deer.

15. गीष्पतिशापानुग्रहपात्रं - Chandra was the recipient of the favour and disfavour from Brihaspati. According to traditional accounts Chandra performed many Rajasuya sacrifices, as a result of which he enjoyed life with Tara and had a son Budha through her. On coming to know of this matter Brihaspati cursed Chandra to be affected by serious diseases like consumption: After a long battle between Brihaspati and Chandra, in which many gods and asuras were involved Brihaspati took back his wife.

16. साधुहृदयसदृशं, शरच्चन्द्रिकाधवलप्रकाशम् - The white cool-rayed full moon is charming in appearance. In the second of the epithets Dikshitar expresses the unique beauty of the full moon in autumn, in the background of the clear sky. The crystal clear whiteness of Chandra brings to the mind of Dikshitar, the exalted people, rich in sattva-guna. Hence appropriately enough Dikshitar compares Chandra to the transparent mind of a noble person.



३. सुरटि रागः रूपक तालः

- प. : अङ्गारकमाश्रयाम्यहं विनताश्रितजनमन्दारं
मङ्गलवारं भूमिकुमारं वारं वारम्
- अ. प. : शृङ्गारकमेषवृश्चिकराश्यधिर्पति
रक्ताङ्गं रक्ताम्बरादिधरं शक्तिशूलधरं
- म. का : मङ्गलं कम्बुगलं मञ्जुलतरपदयुगलं
मङ्गलदायकमेषतुरङ्गं मकरोत्तुङ्गम्
- च. : दानवसुरसेवितं, मन्दस्मितविलसितवक्त्रं,
धरणीप्रदं भ्रातृकारकं रक्तनेत्रं
दीनरक्षकं पूजितवैद्यनाथक्षेत्रं
दिव्यौधादिगुरुगुहकटाक्षानुग्रहपात्रं
- म. का. : भानुचन्द्रगुरुमित्रं भासमानसुकलत्रं
जानुस्थहस्तचित्रं चतुर्भुजमतिविचित्रम् ॥

I take refuge again and again in Angaraka, the divine Mandāra tree to the humble dependent devotees, the presiding deity of Tuesday, and the son of Earth.

Who is the Lord of the cherished of Mesha and Vrschika (Aries and Scorpio) with red limbs, who wears the red dress and is the bearer of the sword and trident.

The auspicious one, with beautiful neck, with lovely feet, bestower of auspiciousness, riding on the Goat, and whose higher apsis is Makara rās (Capricorn)

Who is worshipped by gods and demons, one with the face beaming and smiling, bestower of landed wealth and brotherhood, with red eyes, protector of the afflicted, worshipped in the holy Vaidisvaran temple, and favoured by the three groups of divine teachers and Subrahmanya, who is the friend of Surya, Chandra and Brihaspathi, shining with his good wife, with his hands on his knees, having four arms, and who is quite extraordinary.

Comments :

1. अङ्गारकं, मङ्गलं, मङ्गलवारम् - Names of Mars. Angaraka is glowing charcoal that is reddish. Mars is red in colour and hence called, 'Chevvāy in Tamil.' The Tamil classic 'Puranaanooru' refers to the planet as 'Chemmeen' (red fish).

As Angaraka has an auspicious form he is called 'Mangala', and the day in the week associated with him, Tuesday, is called 'Mangalavāra'. However no auspicious action or festival is performed on Tuesday. War and other such activities, if started on this day, is said to end in victory.

2. विनताश्रितजनमन्दारं, दीनरक्षकं, दानवसुरसेवितम् - These adjectives describe the consideration of Mars towards his devotees and the needy. 'Mandāra' is one of the five trees in the paradise (svarga) that fulfils all the desires of those who approach it. Dikshitar describes Angaraka as "the Mandara tree to the people who resort to the planet with humility". He also protects those in distress (Deenarakshaka). On account of his severe penance to Siva Angaraka reached the status of a planet and being worshipped by both asuras (dānava) and Gods (suras).

3. Regarding his personal details Dikshitar says that he is 'the son of the earth' (bhoomikumāra). Many are the stories known about the birth of Angaraka. One of these is as follows: "When Uma Devi (Goddess Earth) was separated from Lord Siva, the latter was deeply interested in contemplation. A drop of sweat fell down on the earth and thus was born the auspicious child 'Mangala'. Goddess Earth nursed the child and when he grew up, he was engaged in intensive penance and the resulting heat created a flaming fire around him. Pleased with this righteous undertaking the gods made him into a planet. Hence he is called Bhauma, Bhoomikumara and Kuja ('Ku' meaning 'earth'). Naturally the primary associate deity of Angaraka is Mother Earth (Prithvi).

4. His connection with Subrahmanya is evident as both of them are said to be born to Siva and Parvathi. Some texts even identify Angaraka with Subrahmanya. In the song however, Dikshitar considers them as different. For he says that Angaraka worthily received the grace through the favourable glances of the divine teachers recognised under the three categories of Divyaugha, Siddhaugha and Mānavaugha in the Sri Cakra worship, and also Lord Subrahmanya- (दिव्यौघादिगुरुहकटाक्षनुग्रहात्मम्).

5. Regarding his physical appearance and iconography Dikshitar has enough details. All his limbs are red (रक्ताङ्गम्). He wears red clothes, garlands and ornaments - रक्ताम्बरादिधरम् - and carries spear and trident in his hands शक्तशूलधरम् - His neck is long and beautiful like a conch - कम्बुगलं - and his feet, very tender - मञ्जुलतरपदयुगलम्. His face is bright with a gentle smile - मन्दस्मित-त्रिलोसितवक्त्रं, and eyes are red. He is splendid with his wife भासमानसुकलत्रं. He has four hands and he uniquely places his hands on the knees (जानुस्थहस्तचित्रं). He rides on a ram (मेघतुरङ्गम्).

6. Dikshitar provides us with the equally important astrological information about Angaraka. These details are—He is the presiding divinity of the two houses of Mesha (Aries) and Vrischika (Scorpio); his higher apsis is in Makara rasi (Capricorn). Amongst many things that Angaraka confers on his devotees, the chief are the gift of land (धरणीप्रदम्), and brotherhood (भ्रातृकारकम्).

Angaraka is friendly with the planets Sun, Moon and Jupiter (भानुचन्द्रगुरु-मित्रम्).

7. An extra piece of information about Angaraka in the song in his worship separately also in the important Vaideesvara temple at Tanjore. The God's name in this temple is quite significant in as much as devotees seek him for good health and cure from sickness.



४. नाट्कुरिञ्जि रागः शम्प तालः

प. : बुधमाश्रयामि सततं सुरविनुतं चन्द्रतारासुतम्

अ. प. : बुधजनैर्वेदितं भूसुरैर्मोदितं

म. का. : मधुरकविताप्रदं महनीयसंपदम् ।

च. : कुङ्कुमसमद्युतिं गुरुगुहमुदाकृतिं
कुजवैरिणं मणिमकुटहारकेयूर-कङ्कणादिधरं
कमनीयतरमिथुनकन्याधिपं पुस्तककरं नपुंसकं

म. का. : किङ्करजनमहितं किल्बिषादिरहितं
शङ्करभक्तहितं सदानन्दसहितम् ॥

I always seek shelter in Budha who is worshipped by the Gods, who is the son of Chandra and Tārā.

Who is revered by the learned, and who brings joy to Brahmins. Who is the bestower of the sweet art of poetry, the one of splendid wealth.

Who is brightly coloured like saffron. Whose form gives delight to Guruguha, who is the enemy of Kuja, the wearer of gem-studded crown, necklace, armlets and bracelets, Lord of the houses of Mithuna and Kanya (Gemini and Virgo), with book in hand and who is neuter (neither man nor woman).

Who is honoured by his attendants, who is devoid of all evil, benefits the devotees of Siva, and is always joyous.

Comments

1. Personal details :

- The details of Budha as the illegitimate son of Chandra and Brihaspati's wife Tara are given above under Chandra.
- Budha is considered a eunuch. Dikshitar reiterates this idea by referring to him as 'Napumsaka'. The Puranas narrate the following story in this connection. A king named Ila once went to the forest of Sukumara for hunting. The forest being cursed by Parvati that

any one entering it would turn into a female, Ila and his associates became feminine. Budha coming there was struck by Ila's beauty and lived with her who gave birth to Pururavas. Taking pity on Ila's transformation, Budha invited the sages and performed as Asvamedha Saerifice when lord Siva appeared. With the Lord's blessing, Ila became man again and returned to his kingdom. Budha brought up his son Pururavas and made him king of Pratishthanapura, and thus perpetuated the lunar race. On account of his association with Ila Budha too had to change sex. By doing penance, Budha attained the state of a planet and was placed very near the Sun.

- c) The very name Budha shows that this planet is endowed with knowledge. He is known also by other names like बुद्धिमतां श्रेष्ठः, and ज्ञानी. Hence he is described in the song as one who could be understood by the learned - बुधजनैर्वेदितं and who delights the brahmanas (भूसुरैर्मोदितम्), He has therefore abundant riches (महनीयसंपदं) and confers poetic talents on his sincere devotees (मधुरकविताप्रदं).
- d) He is brightly coloured like saffron - कुङ्कुमसमद्युति - and wears gem-studded crown, necklace, anklets and bracelets. In one of his four hands he carries a book. He is always happy, is glorified by his attendants and bears no malice.

As seen above in para 1, Budha had the blessing of lord Siva. Hence he is always well disposed towards the devotees of Siva.

2. Dikshtar mentions two astrological aspects of Budha. The first is that he is an enemy of Kuja or Angaraka. According to an astrological verse also Sun, Moon, Mars, and Brihaspati are friendly among themselves; they are rivals to Budha, Sukra, Saturn and Rahu.

रवोन्दुभौमगुरवो जशुक्रशानिराहवः ।

स्वस्मिन् मित्राणि चत्वारि परस्मिन् शत्रवः स्मृताः ॥

The Second is that Budha presides over the two rasis Mithuna and Kanya (Gemini and Virgo).



५. अठाणा रागः त्रिपुट तालः

प. : बृहस्पते तारापते ब्रह्मजाते नमोऽस्तु ते

अ. प. : महाबल विभो गोष्पते मञ्जुधनुर्मीनाधिपते
महेन्द्राद्युपासिताकृते माधवादिदिनुतधीमते

च. : सुराचार्यवर्य वज्रधर शुभलक्षण जगत्त्रयगुरो
जरादिर्वाजिताक्रो^रज, कचजनकाश्रित, कल्पतरो
पुरारिगुरुगुहसम्मोदित पुत्रकारक दीनबन्धो
परादिचत्वारिवाक्स्वरूपप्रकाशक दयासिन्धो

म. का. : निरामयाय नीतिकर्त्रे निरङ्कुशाय विश्वभर्त्रे
निरञ्जनाय भुवनभोवत्रे निरंशाय मखप्रदात्रे

Salutations to Brihaspati, Lord of Tara, one who is born of Brahma.

Oh omnipresent one, Oh Lord of great strength, Lord of speech. Lord of lovely Dhanus and Mina, whose form is adored by Indira and the other Gods, and who is the great intellectual honoured by divinities like Madhava (or Vishnu).

Oh most esteemed teacher of the Gods, wielder of the thunderbolt, of auspicious markings, teacher of three worlds, one who is not affected by old age and the like, unexcitable, father of Kaca, the divine Kalpataru for those who take refuge in Him, who is a delight to Siva and Guruguha, and the bestower of offspring, kin to the distressed, the manifester of the four phases of speech, an ocean of compassion.

Who is devoid of all illness, the author of smṛti, uncontrolled, the Lord of the Universe, the untarnished one, who delights the words, one who has no limb or quality and is the bestower of fruits of sacrifice.

Comments :

Brihaspati (Jupiter) as preceptor of the gods and the chief personality of the heavenly world, is given a high place among the planetary divinities, next only to Sun. The Athana raga that has special grandeur and graces in the middle and higher registers (madhya and thara sthayis) seems to fit in appropriately to the

eminence of this deity. Many are the personal and mythological details that we come to know of Brihaspathi from this song.

Personal :

a) The very name 'Brihaspati' or 'Vachaspati' in the Vedic texts reveals him to be the personification of Piety and Religion and the chief offerer of prayer and sacrifices to the gods with whom he intercedes for men. In later times he is the god of wisdom and eloquence. Dikshitar calls him master of Speech (गोष्पति), very powerful (महाबल), Lord (विभु), Intelligent (धोमान्), and best teacher of the god (सुराचार्यवर्य).

The composer refers to him also as 'the wielder of the thunderbolt', perhaps due to his close association with Indra.

The association of Brihaspati with Vāk or sonant energy on account of his offering prayer as mentioned in the Vedic texts, has been responsible for his being called Vāgiśa and Vākpati. Dikshitar goes one step further in describing him as the god who manifests the three phases of indistinct speech produced inside the body (at the navel as Parā, passing through the heart and throat as Pasyanti, and Madhyamā), and also of the fourth phase of articulate sound (Vaikhari) that comes out of the mouth - परादिचत्वारि-वाक्स्वरूप-प्रकाशक.

There are two attributes in the song which seem to be redundant — जगत्त्रययुरो and विश्वभर्त्रे. Due to his reciting the prayer to gods and pleading them for human beings he is called the 'teacher of three worlds'. The attribute 'Visvabhartre' literally means that he is 'the lord of the universe', but this is not quite happy in the context. Since Brihaspati is considered to be the originator of the manifest and unmanifest sonant energy by Dikshitar 'Visva' could be taken in the secondary sense of the 'world of sound' (Sadbaprapanca).

- b) As Brihaspati was born to sage Angiras, son of Brahmā through Sraddha devi, Dikshitar rightly calls him as one arising from Brahmā (Brahmajāta). As seen above under Chandra, Brihaspati's wife is Tara, and his son is Kaca. According to the Mahabharata Brihaspati sends Kaca to Sukra, the priest of the demons, to learn the details of the Amrita Sanjivani mantra.
- c) Dikshitar refers to two astrological details about Brihaspati—that he presides over the two rāsis of Dhanus and Mina (Sagittarius and Pisces), and he blesses his devotees with sons (Putrakaraka).

- d) Endowed with the above-mentioned qualities he is naturally worshipped not only by Indra but also by gods like Vishnu; he is not affected by old age (जरादिवर्जित) and diseases (निरामय). He bears auspicious marks and always looks pleasant without being excited (शुभलक्षण, अक्रोध). He is a friend of the depressed and an ocean of compassion.
- e) An important information about him is that he is known as the author of a treatise on ethical and judicial matters ; this is referred to by Dikshitar in the attribute नीतिवर्त. Of course scholars in the Dharma-sastra, and lawyers and judges know about the many citations from Brihaspati Smriti available in almost all the digests (nibandhas) of and commentaries on Dharmasastras and Smritis. as also from the epics, specially the Mahabharata. As no manuscript of Brihaspati Smriti is available now in any part of India, Prof. K. V. Rangaswami Aiyangar has brought out the Brihaspati Smriti as reconstructed from about 200 digests and commentarial literature through the Gaekwad's Oriental Series (Baroda, 1941). Seven sections of this Smriti are thus available. They are like law and procedure (Vyavahara), sacraments (Samskara), traditional customs (Acara) and expiatory rites (Prayascitta).



६. परशु रागः अठ तालः

- प. : श्रीशुक्रभगवन्तं चिन्तयामि सततं सकलतत्त्वज्ञम्
 अ. प. : हे शुक्रभगवन् मामाशु पालय वृषतुलाधीश, दैत्यहितोपदेश,
 म. क. : केशवकटाक्षैकनेत्रं किरीटधरं धवलगात्रम्
 च. : विंशतिवत्सरोडुदशाविभागं अष्टवर्गं कवि
 कलत्रकारकं रविनिर्जरगुरुवैरिणं
 नवांश-होराद्रेक्काणादि-वर्गोत्तमावसरसमये वक्रोच्च-नीच-स्वक्षेत्र-वरकेन्द्र-
 मूलत्रिकोणे
 म. का. : त्रिंशांशषष्ठ्यंशैरावतांश-पारिजातांश-गोपुरांश-
 राजयोगकारकं राज्यप्रदं गुरुगुहमुदम् ॥

I always meditate upon the God Sukra, the knower of all truths.

Rescue me quickly Oh Sukra, Lord of the houses of Tula and Vrsha, and sound counsellor to all demons.

Whose one eye was safeguarded by the grace of Kesava, who is the wearer of the crown and whose body is white.

Whose beneficial influence on the various constellations is for the duration of twenty years, one having eight vargas, one called 'the poet', a beneficent planet for material bliss, inimical to Surya and Brihaspati, who while in navāmsa, horā, drekkāna, vakra, ucca, nica, svakshetra, varakendra, and in mulatrikona and while in the different amsas, trimsāmsa, shashtyamsa, airāvatāmsa, pārijātāmsa, and gopuramsa, bestows royalty and kingdom and delights Guruguha.

Comments :

The song on Sukra is unique in that it is composed in the rare raga Paraz and is also rich in technical terms prevalent in Jyotisha literature, All these astronomical terms occur in the charana and its madhyamakala sabhitya.

Sukra in Indian mythological literature belongs to an ancient honoured family. He is a descendant of sage Bhrigu, who is closely connected with fire in the Vedic, epic and puranic literature.

In the song Dikshitar gives only two of his names, Sukra and Kavi. 'Sukra' has many meanings; two of them applicable to the planet are 'white and bright' and 'semen'. The Puranas and epics narrate the following story in this connection: Once Antakasura fought against the gods but he was defeated, his army being killed to the last man. He went to Sukra and prayed to him to revive the dead Asuras, which he (Sukra) did. The gods were surprised at the dead soldiers challenging them back to war. They went to Nandi, the great bull, the vehicle of Siva and appealed to him for help. Nandi approached Siva and narrated to him the disaster to the gods caused by his teaching the Sanjeevini Mantra to Sukra, the preceptor of Asuras. Siva asked Nandi to bring Sukra before him and when he came, swallowed him. Sukra remained in Siva's stomach for thousands of years. In the battle that ensued between Antakasura and the gods, the former was defeated and killed. Sukra was witnessing the tragedy that befell the Asuras from Siva's stomach but remained helpless. Sukra did penance for thousands of years seated in Siva's body and the merciful Lord brought him out. He was completely white by remaining so long inside the Lord's stomach and hence was named Sukra. According to another version Siva released him through his semen. Dikshitar confirms Sukra being called so on account of his white and bright complexion (Dhavalagatram).

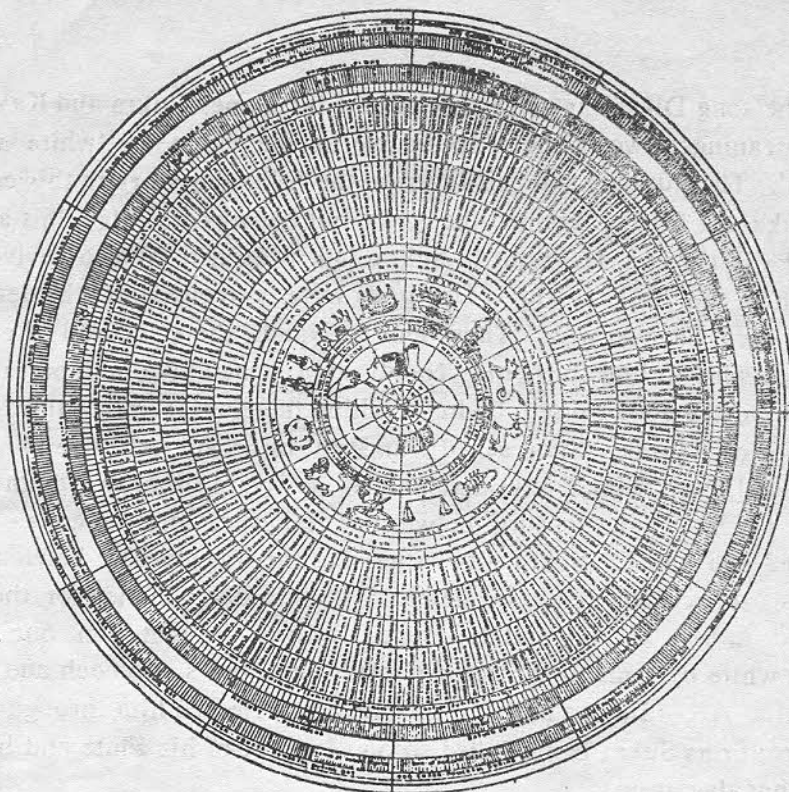
The name 'Kavi' is derived from the root 'Ku' 'to sound' or 'Kav' to describe'. 'Kavi' generally refers to a poet, since he knows and describes all things and persons - कवते सर्वं जानाति, सर्वं वर्णयति, सर्वं सर्वतो वा गच्छति.

As a special name it is given to gods and divinities like Sukrachārya, Vishnu (in the Vishnusahasranama), Agni and Varuna.

Sukra was a repository of Vedic knowledge and hence he is mentioned in the song as one who knows the essence and secrets of all lores, सकलतत्त्वज्ञ.

Sukra is known to have lost one of his eyes, when Vishnu appearing as Vamana, thrust the demon Mahabali down to the nether world and Sukra tried to obstruct it. केशवकटाक्षिकनेत्रं in the song refers to this incident.

As mentioned earlier this song is unique in Dikshitar's references to many astronomical terms in the charana. Herein the main thrust of the composer is to show that during the long period of 20 years that Sukra presides over the lunar mansions or constellations, the planetary deity confers kingship or such eminent positions. In this connection Dikshitar refers to the उडुदशा system according to which each planet presides over a particular period of time (दशा). According



The concentric circles in the above chart indicate divisions of the zodiac according to the Nirāyana system of Hindu astrology. Starting from the first inner circle, beginning with the sign Meṣa (Aries), the numerical order of the remaining signs are given. The second circle depicts the primeval creator (*kala puruṣa*), who with his face northward and while encircling the heavens, has all the twelve signs and the twenty-seven lunar mansions (*nakṣatras*) embedded on him. The third circle shows *mūlatrikopas*, the places of the seven planets, and the fourth indicates the Lords of the various zodiacal signs. The fifth circle shows the names of the twenty-seven *nakṣatras*, and the sixth the pictorial representations of the twelve zodiac signs (*rāśis*). The seventh circle gives the Hindu names for these signs. The Lords of the *horās* ($\frac{1}{4}$ of *rāśi*) are indicated in the eighth circle. The 9th, 10th, 11th, 12th, 13th, 14th and 15th circles represent respectively the divisions explained above; *drekāṇa*, *saptāṁśa*, *navāṁśa*, *dasāṁśa*, *dvādaśāṁśa*, *śoḍaśāṁśa*, and *triṁśāṁśa*. The 16th circle shows the divisions of *saptāṁśa*, i.e. $\frac{1}{4}^\circ$. Each of these divisions in turn is given a particular name and defined in progressive order for all the odd-numbered zodiac signs, whereas for all even-numbered signs these are given the same names but in their reverse order. The 17th circle designates the exaltation positions (*paramocca*) of the seven planets, while their corresponding debilitations (*paramanicha*) are shown in the 18th circle. The 19th circle defines the characteristics of the respective signs, and the outer circle, the 20th, shows the placements of what are known the culminating points (*rkṣa sandhi*).

[astrological chart from Mantresvara "Phaladīpikā"]

THE TEN PRINCIPLE DIVISIONS OF THE ZODIAC

<i>rāśi</i>	1/12th	of 360°	= 30°
<i>horā</i>	1/2	of 30°	= 15°
<i>drekāṇa</i>	1/3	of 30°	= 10°
<i>saptāṁśa</i>	1/7	of 30°	= $4^\circ 20'$ approx.
<i>navāṁśa</i>	1/9	of 30°	= $3^\circ 20'$
<i>dasāṁśa</i>	1/10	of 30°	= 3°
<i>dvādaśāṁśa</i>	1/12	of 30°	= $2^\circ 30'$
<i>śoḍaśāṁśa</i>	1/16	of 30°	= 2° approx.
<i>triṁśāṁśa</i>	1/30	of 30°	= 1°
<i>saptāṁśa</i>	1/60	of 30°	= $\frac{1}{2}^\circ$

SIGNS OF THE ZODIAC

Meṣa	Aries	♈
Viṣa	Taurus	♉
Mithuna	Gemini	♊
Karkata	Cancer	♋
Simha	Leo	♌
Kanyā	Virgo	♍
Tulā	Libra	♎
Vṛścika	Scorpio	♏
Dhanu	Sagittarius	♐
Makara	Capricorn	♑
Kumbha	Aquarius	♒
Mina	Pisces	♓

to Mantresvara these are: "Surya 6 years, Chandra 10, Mangala 7, Rahu 18, Brihaspati 16, Sani 19, Budha 17, Ketu 7 and Sukra 20. Each of these main periods is divided into smaller sub-periods, (bhuktis) and each sub-period is divided into smaller periods (antara). The antara are again subdivided into antarāntaras, and so on until swara or the time necessary for the inhaling and exhaling of the breath is reached. Thus the planets individually and collectively exercise controls over all time-spans of existence.

नवांश, होरा and द्रेक्काण refer to measurements of arc as determined from the first point of Aries (मेष), 'the vernal equinox.' This is the point at which the path of the Sun crosses from the South to the North of the celestial equator. All measurements are made on the ecliptic; navāmsa is $\frac{1}{9}$ th of $360^\circ = 40^\circ$; horā is $\frac{1}{2}$ of $30^\circ = 15^\circ$; drekkāna is $\frac{1}{3}$ of $30^\circ = 10^\circ$.

The best Kendra positions (cardines) of Sukra are at the positions 1, 4, 7 and 10.

ऐरावतांश, पारिजातांश and गोपुरांश - these terms refer to particular combinations of the vargas for the planets. According to the 10 varga (dasavarga) system, Mantresvara says—'whether a planet is in its friendly house, its own house, or in its exaltation house, a combination of 2 vargas is called parijatamsa, that of 4 is called gopuramsa, that of 6, airavatamsa.'

See Astrological diagram on p. 22 for more details.



७. यदुकुलकाम्भोजि रागः चतुरश्रजाति एक तालः

- प : दिवाकरतनुजं शनश्चरं धोरतरं सन्ततं चिन्तयेऽहम्
 अ. प. : भवाम्भुनिधौ निमग्नजनानां भयङ्करं अतिकूरफलदं
 म. का. : भवानोशकटाक्षपात्रभूतभक्तिमताम् अतिशयशुभफलदम् ।
 च. : कालाञ्जनकान्तियुक्तदेहं कालसहादरं काकवाहं
 नोलांशुकपुष्पमालावृतं नोलरत्नभूषणालङ्कृतं
 मालिनोबिनुत - गुरुगुहमुदितं मकरकुम्भराशिनाथं
 तिलतैलमिश्रितान्नदीपप्रियं दयासुधासागरं निर्भयं
 म. का. : कालदण्डपरिधीडितजानुं कामितार्थ - फलद - कामधेनुं
 कालचक्रभेदचित्रमानुं कल्पितच्छायादेवीसूनुम् ॥

I always meditate upon the slow-moving Sani, the sun of Surya and the courageous one.

Who causes fear in people plunged in the ocean of worldly existence, and is the harbinger of calamitous events. Who grants uniquely auspicious rewards for devotees favoured by Siva's benign glances.

Who with a body of dark lustre-like collyrium, brother of Yama, riding on his vehicle the Crow, decorated with blue dress and a blue flower wreath, with ornaments embedded with blue stones, who delights Guruguha as he is worshipped by Malini, Lord of the two houses of Makara and Kumbha, with special liking for the lamp lit with sesame oil and for rice with sesame seeds, an ocean of nectar of compassion and fearless.

Whose knee was disfigured by the staff of the Lord of Death, who is like Kamadhenu yielding all desires, the fire capable of splitting the time-wheel and one conceived as the son of the Goddess Chaya.

Comments :

Saturn or Sani is considered generally, an inauspicious and maleficent. But he has twin aspects. In fact his malign influence on the fortunes of human beings is better known than his beneficial nature. Dikshitar expresses this in the

anupallavi of the song and a few attributes. He is very bold (धीरतर) and fearless (निर्भय) in bringing all types of people under his control. However, he does not trouble and frighten every one without consideration. He is frightful and pitilessly brings about calamitous events for persons plunging in the ocean of worldly existence. But for deserving devotees of Siva, he is able to provide with uniquely rich rewards.

Hence he is the divine cow Kamadhenu that yields the desired things - कामितार्थफलदकामधेनुं, and also an ocean of nectar of compassion (दयासुधासागरम्). His powers are unlimited and he is veritably the fire in working against the wheel of time (कालचक्रभेदचित्तभानुं).

Although Saturn is the son of Sun (दिवाकरतनुज) he lacks the brilliance and sprightly nature of his father. He limps and walks slowly and hence is given the apt name, "the slow-moving planet" (शनैश्चर).

It is said that Sani on a certain occasion spoke of his step-mother Samjna disparagingly. Hence Samjna's son Yama struck the knee of Sani heavily with his staff (danda), and made him lame. Cf. Dikshitar's expression कालदण्डपरिपीडितजानुम्.

Saturn is not only lame, but also dark-complexioned. This is quite to be expected for he is the son of Sun through Chāyādevī (कल्पितच्छायादेवीसूनुं), who is no other than the dark shadow of Sun's real wife Samjna. Hence Dikshitar describes him as कालाञ्जनकान्तियुक्तदेहम्; besides he is fond of blue dress and ornaments, and even his vehicle is the black crow. He is specially fond of the lamp with gingelly oil and his naivedya offering is sesamum mixed with rice.

Saturn is the lord of Makara and Kumbha rasis (Capricorn and Aquarius signs in the Zodiac).

As in the case of other planetary deities Dikshitar glorifies Sani also as delighting his favourite deity Subrahmanya describing him as one who is adored by Malini (मालिनीविनुतगुरुगुहमहितं). Each god has his own Pithasaktis, and Malini is one of the nine Pithasaktis of Subrahmanya, as is evident from the following verse—

शकुनी रेवती पूता महापूता निशीथिनी ।
मालिनी शीतला बुद्धा नवमी विश्वतोमुखी ॥

८. रमामनोहरी रागः रूपक तालः

प. : स्मराम्यहं सदा राहुं सूर्यचन्द्रवीक्ष्यं विकृतदेहम्

अ. प. : सुरासुरं रोगहरं सर्पादिभीतिहरं

म. का. : शूर्पासनसुखकरं शूलायुधधरकरम् ।

च. : करालवदनं कठिनं कयानार्णकरुणाद्रापाङ्गं
चतुर्भुजं खड्गखेटादिधरणं

म. का. : चर्मादिनीलवस्त्रं गोमेदकाभरणं
शनिशुक्रमित्रगुरुहसन्तोषकरणम् ॥

I am constantly reminded of Rahu who siezes Surya and Chandra and is himself deformed.

Who is both God and demon, who removes all ills and dispels danger from poisonous creatures like serpents. Who does good to those who worship him seated in his grain-sieve and who bears the spear.

Who with a dreadful face, harsh, directing his compassionate side-glance when worshipped with the Kayāna mantra, with four hands and carrying the sword and shield.

Who is attired in blue cloth and dress made of leather, who wears ornaments made of Gomedaka gems, the friendly planet of Sani and Sukra, and who delights Guruguha.



९. चामर रागः रूपक तालः

- प. : महासुरं केतुमहं भजामि छायाग्रहवरम्
 अ. प. : महाविचित्रमकुटधरं मङ्गलवस्त्रादिधरं
 म. का. : नरपीठस्थितं सुखं नवग्रहयुतं सखं
 च. : केतुं कृण्वन् मन्त्रिणं क्रोधनिधिं जैमिनं
 कुलुत्थादिभक्षणं कोणध्वजपताकिनं
 म. क. : गुरुगुहचामरभरणं गुणदोषचिदाभरणं
 ग्रहणादिकार्यकारणं ग्रहापसव्यसञ्चारिणम् ॥

I worship Ketu, the great demon who is the foremost of the shadow planets.

Who wears a peculiar crown and auspicious dress. Who is happy in his partial human-like body and is friendly in the group of nine planets.

Who is adored by the 'Ketum krnvan' mantra, who is exceedingly wrathful, a descendent of Jaimini, who savours the horse-grain offered to him; and has his flag with the cut-out triangle.

Who bears the fan of Guruguha, whose distinction lies in his discernment of good and bad, who causes eclipses and moves in a counterclockwise direction.

RAHU and KETU

Comments :

It is mostly accepted that Dikshitar composed only the seven songs for the presiding planetary deities of the seven days in a week and that the two songs on Rahu and Ketu were later additions, so as to make the navagrahas fully represented. The difference between the style and content of the seven songs on deities Sun to Saturn and those on Rahu and Ketu is well noticeable. It must also be remembered that the first seven are full fledged independent planets rich in varied information. Rahu and Ketu do not enjoy these privileges.

Ragu and Ketu are to be considered together in as much as they form according to tradition, the tail and head of dragon, or as descending and ascending nodes.

Rahu is considered an asura and as a son of Vipracitti and Simhika, and as having dragon's a tail. When the gods churned the ocean for the Amrita or nectar of immortality, he disguised himself like one of them and drank a portion; but the Sun and Moon revealed the fraud to Vishnu, who cut off Rahu's head, which thereupon became fixed in the stellar sphere; having become immortal through drinking the Amrita, he has ever since wreaked his vengeance on the Sun and Moon by occasionally swallowing them. At the same time the tail of the demon became Ketu and gave birth to a numerous progeny of comets and fiery meteors. In astronomy Rahu is variously regarded as a dragon's head, as the ascending node of the moon or point where the moon intersects the ecliptic in passing northwards, and as one of the planets. However these two are called Chayagrahas or those receiving the image or gnomon's shadow.

Due to Rahu being originally a demon, but had the occasion to drink nectar, he is considered by Dikshitar both a god and a demon (सुरासुरं). Since he is only the tail portion of the dragon he is said to have a deformed body (विकृतदेहं). The song further describes his iconographical details, dreadful face, dress in the blue colour and made of leather, and seat of the shape of a sieve. He is also known to be the remover of diseases, dispeller of fear of snakes and poisonous reptiles, merciful, and a friend of Saturn and Venus.

Dikshitar is careful to mention that the mantra starting with the word 'Kayāna' is to be recited while worshipping Rahu, and when this is done, he becomes very compassionate.

The above mantra occurs in Rig Veda (IV. 31. 1) and Taittiriya Samhita (I. 5. 3. 1). It is as follows :-

कया नश्चित् आभुवदूती सदावृधः सखा, कया शचिष्ठया वृता ।

Ketu is considered the best of the chāyāgrahas. His crown is said to be very extraordinary; he is friendly with all the other planets, but is an exceedingly wrathful person. He is a descendant of sage Jaimini and is to be worshipped with the mantra starting with the words 'Ketum krinvan'. As occurring in Taittiriya Samhita (7. 4. 20. 1) the mantra is as follows :-

केतुं कृण्वन्नकेतवे पेशो मर्या अपेशसे । सम् उषद्भिरजायथाः ।

We have done a sweeping survey of the rich content of the Navagraha songs, and even this overview would have revealed the versatile knowledge of the varied Sastras, of the procedural details of worship and the sincere devotion of Muttusvami Dikshitar. More than all this is his great concern for the common man who is not equipped with the requisite knowledge and has no resources at his command to do the proper worship of the deities. It was noted at the beginning of this paper that the Navagraha-kritis were composed for the sake of Tambi Appan, who played the Suddhamaddalam at the temple at Tiruvarur, and was also a sincere disciple of Dikshitar. It is said that Tambi Appan was suffering from acute stomach pain continuously for some time. Coming to know of this information Dikshitar thought about the matter and found out astrologically that Tambi Appan was not under the favourable influence of the planets ; and that he should specially offer worship to the planetary deities. However Dikshitar thought that Tambi Appan would not be able to do the ordained worship fully as prescribed in the Mantra and Tantra Sastras so that he would be able to get the full benefit of the worship and relief from his physical pain. So he composed the songs so that his disciple could at least sing them. Dr. V. Raghavan in his Mahakavya (XIII. 53. p. 141) on Muttusvami Dikshitar puts this idea beautifully thus—

मन्त्रैरुपासनममुष्य नवग्रहाणां
नो शक्यमित्ययमुपायमवैक्षतैवम् ।
शास्त्रार्थमेदुर - नवग्रहकीर्तनानि
गानेन तस्य सुखसिद्धिकराणि चक्रे ॥

After composing these songs that richly glorify the nine planetary deities, Dikshitar prayed to them that they confer their blessings on Tambi Appan. The teacher also asked his pupil to sing the songs with sincere devotion and prayerful attitude, completely surrendering himself to lord Tyagesa, at whose temple Tambi Appan was playing the percussion instrument.

The devoted disciple did so and no wonder, he was relieved of the stomach disorder. Dr. Raghavan says in the above kavya (v. 67, p. 144)—

आचार्यवाक्यमनुतिष्ठत एवमस्य
तम्ब्यप्पनाम्न उदरामय आशु शान्ते ।

वृद्धिं जगाम फलवत्त्वयशो जगत्यां
श्रीमुत्तुदीक्षितनवग्रहकीर्तनानाम् ॥

Dikshitar was not only an adept in various Sastras, procedural details of the worship of different deities, he had a strong belief in the proper worship being rewarded with the necessary results. Further he had such consideration for the non-initiate and the general worshipper, that he embedded the esoteric mantra sastra and mythological lore in many of his songs. The Navagraha kirtanas are a precious collection for the common devotee ; even if one sings these songs set in apt words and rich melody, with an understanding of their general meaning, he would be surely rewarded aesthetically and spiritually.

